

(DRAFT)

Washington Transportation Plan Update

Interim Briefing to the Transportation Commission

Transportation Access

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record document. It is a draft
and will be revised as needed.
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Commission Meeting
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**Washington State
Department of Transportation**

We Are a Car-Dominated Society, but Some People Do Not Drive

This presentation focuses on the population that cannot drive, how they access the transportation system, and what strategies can be employed to address their needs.

Persons with special transportation needs fall into four broad groups:

- The elderly
- People with disabilities
- Children
- People with low incomes

The individuals with special needs use services from a variety of transportation providers. These providers can be formal: transit, paratransit (demand response), taxi, intercity bus, ferry, carpool and vanpool; or informal: volunteers, church groups, program staff (caseworkers), self-drive, service groups, informal carpools.

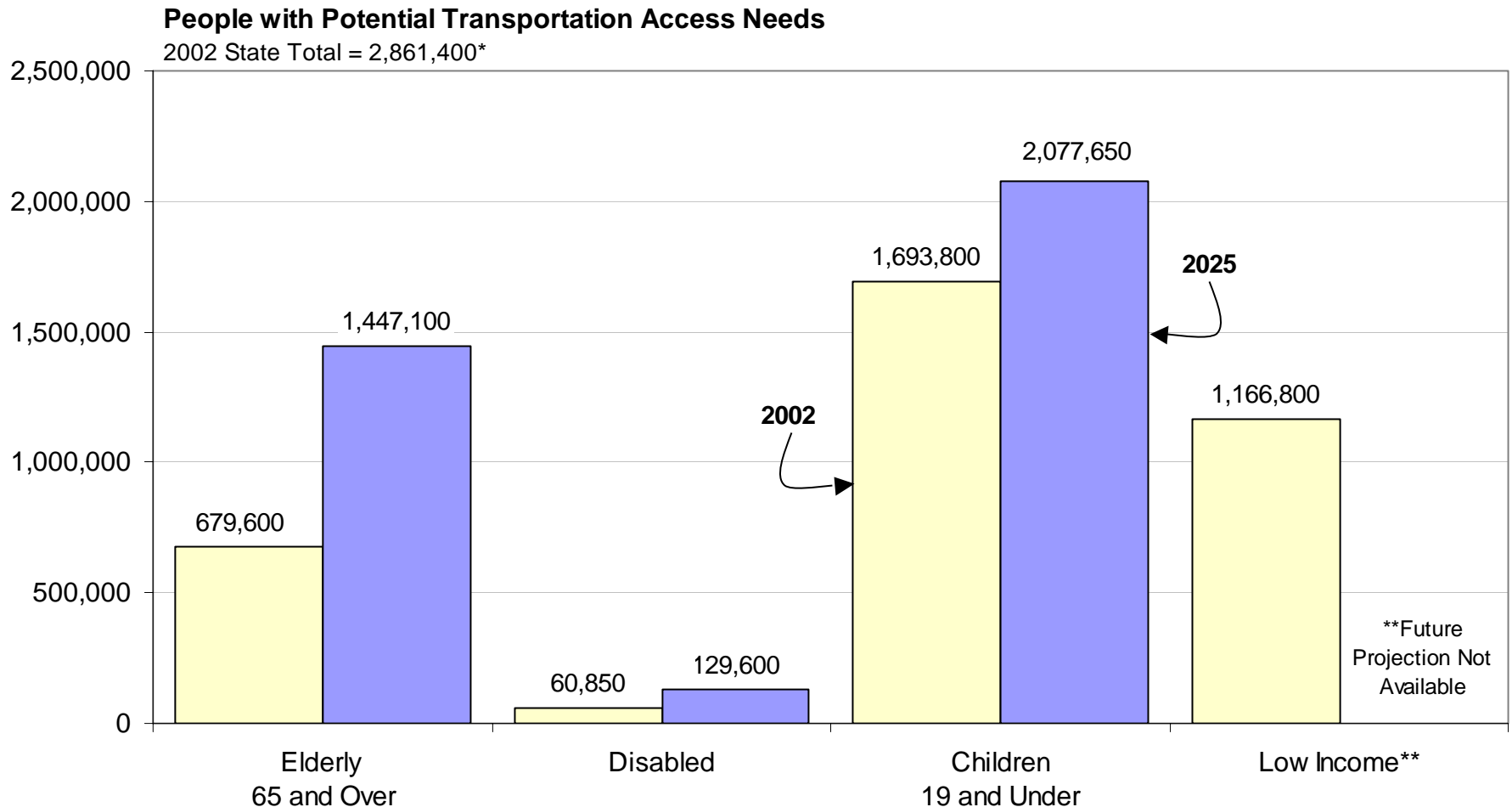
For the purposes of defining the population with special transportation needs we refer to RCW 81.66.010(4):

“Persons with special transportation needs” means those persons, including their personal attendants, who because of physical or mental disability, income status or age are unable to transport themselves or to purchase appropriate transportation.”

Much of the information in this presentation is preliminary and requires further refinement.

Who Needs Help Accessing Transportation?

Not all people who are elderly, low income, persons with disabilities, or kids lack mobility but a portion of these population groups do.



*Adjusted for Double Counting

Our Older Population is Growing

Age is not a good indicator of the driving capabilities of older people. However, for statistical purposes, age 65 and older was selected to reflect the older population.

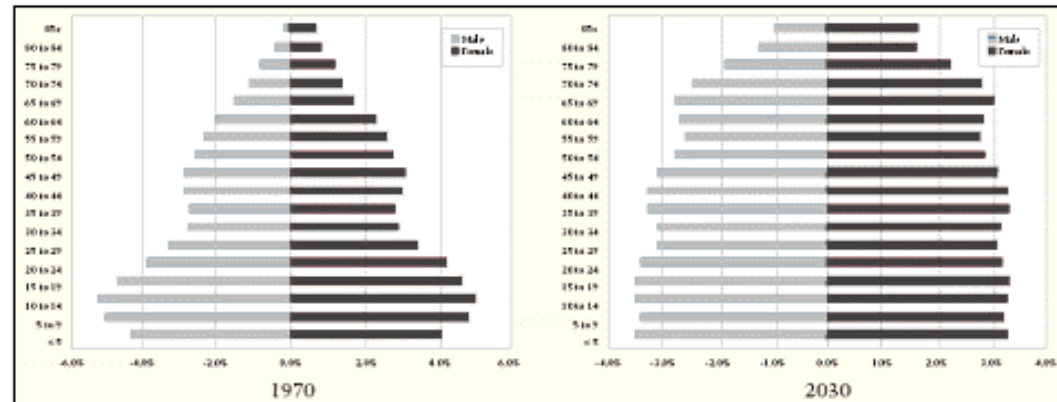
The percentage of people over age 65 has grown at a greater rate than the rest of the U.S. population for the entire 20th century. The number of older individuals will more than double by 2050, reaching an estimated 78 million across the country.

Older population is rapidly increasing

Washington State is among the fastest-aging states in the country, ranking 20th among the 50 states. During 1990-2000, the population 45 and older grew 37% and 85 and older grew 50%. These numbers are critical because by year 2020, people 45 and older in 2000 will have reached the age of 65.

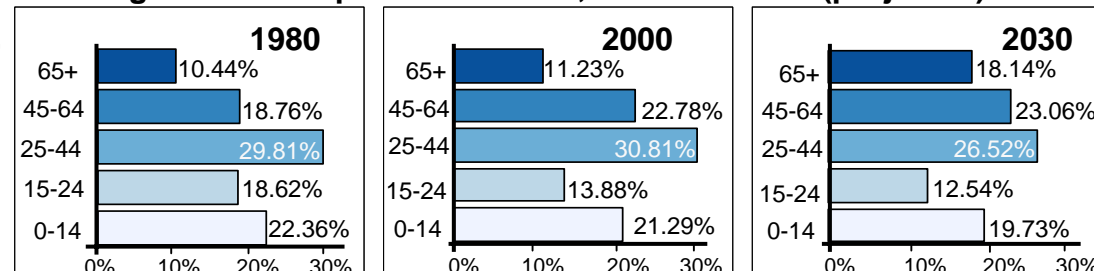
Increased income and improvements in medical care, public health, and increased education are the major reasons people are living longer.

Squaring of the Population Pyramid



US Population in 1970 and 2030 (projected)

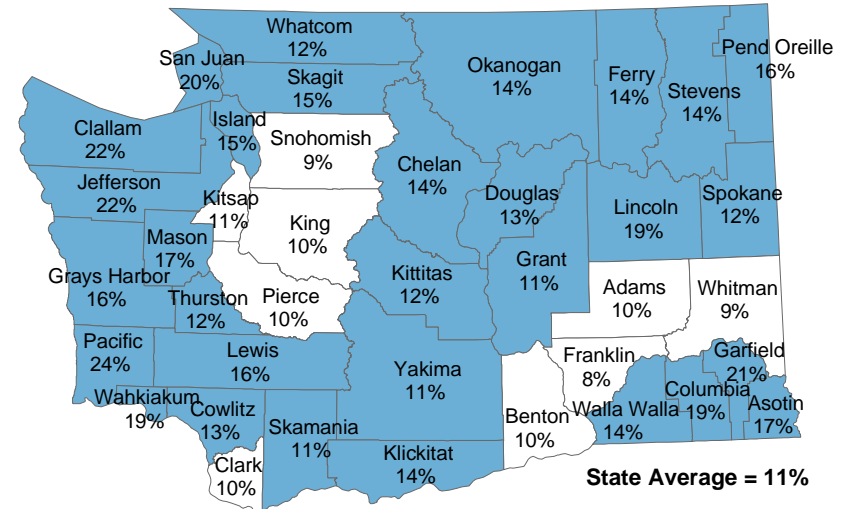
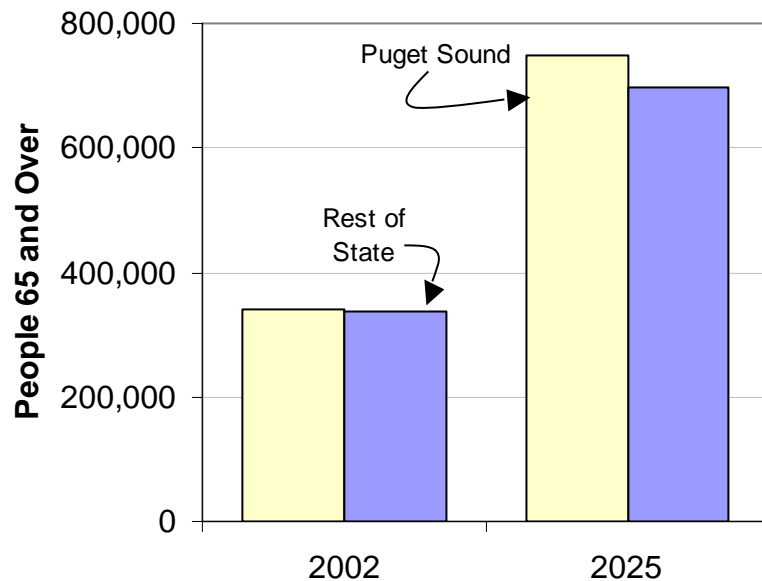
Washington State Population in 1980, 2000 and 2030 (projected)



Washington's Older Population

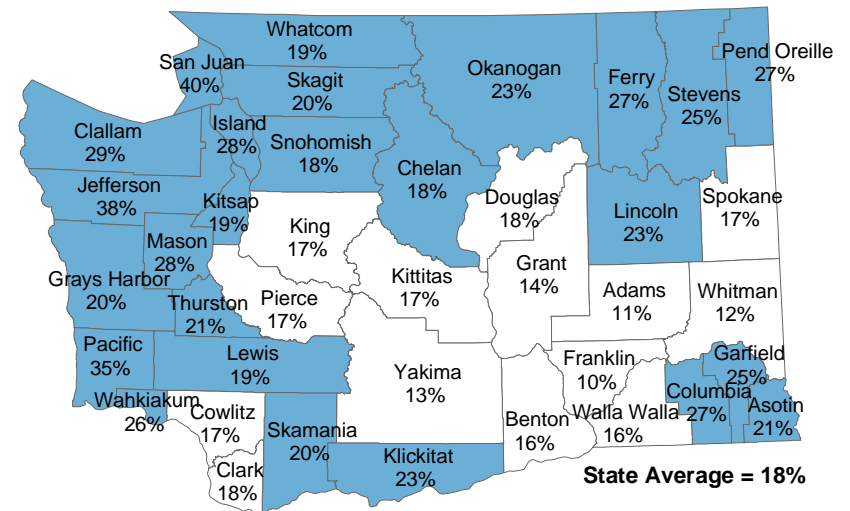
A slight majority of the total number of people age 65 and over resides in the Puget Sound region. However, the counties with the largest percentages of residents age 65 and over are located in retirement or rural areas in the Upper Olympic Peninsula, Northeast, and Southeast parts of the state.

People Over 65 Residing in the Puget Sound Region vs. the Rest of the State



% of County Population 65 and Over in 2002

Below State Average Above State Average



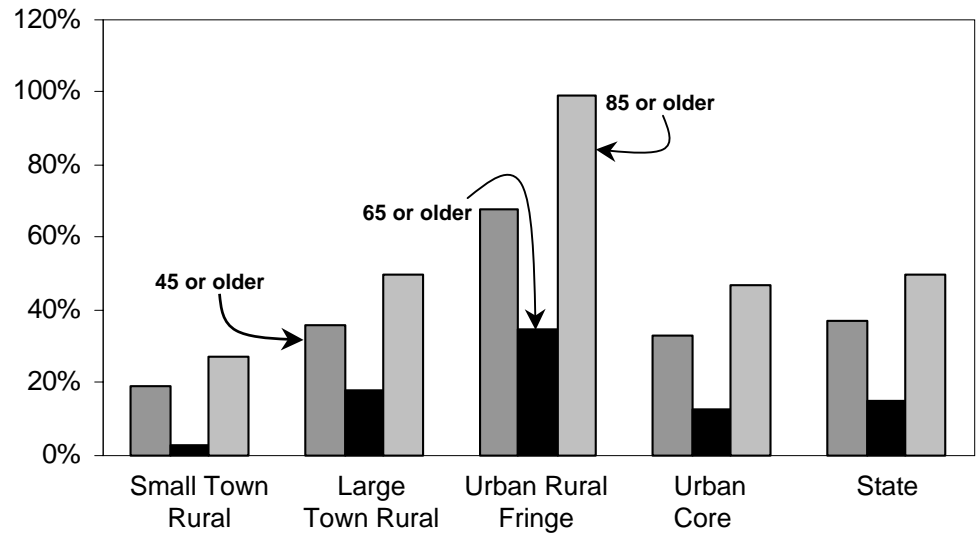
% of County Population 65 and Over in 2025

Below State Average Above State Average

Washington's Older Population By Location of Residence

- The number of people age 65 and older is growing fastest in suburban areas. This reflects the aging of the suburban population.
- Older people are remaining in their homes and are tending to stay in the types of areas that they've lived in.
- Older Washingtonians are continuing to drive.
 - Most have been driving their entire lives and may not stop until they need curb-to-curb public transportation.
 - 79% of Washington's older population maintains a driver's license.

Percent Change in Elderly Population by Rural Classification
Washington, 1999-2000

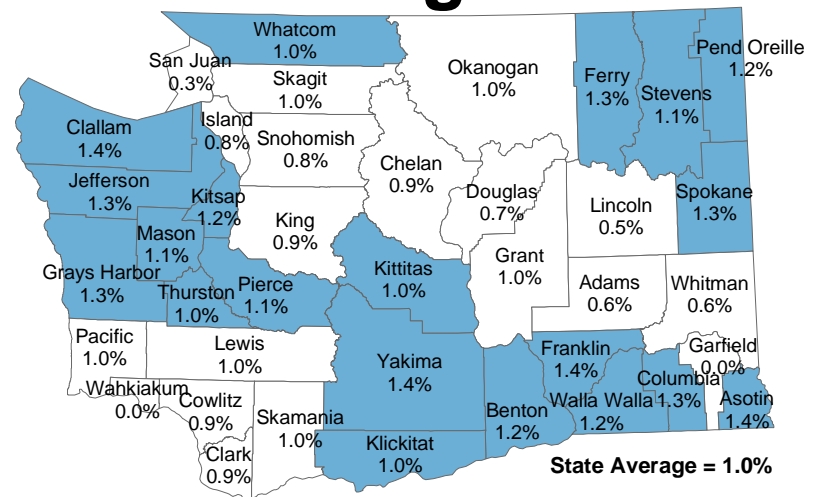


The growing elderly population has distinct transportation needs:

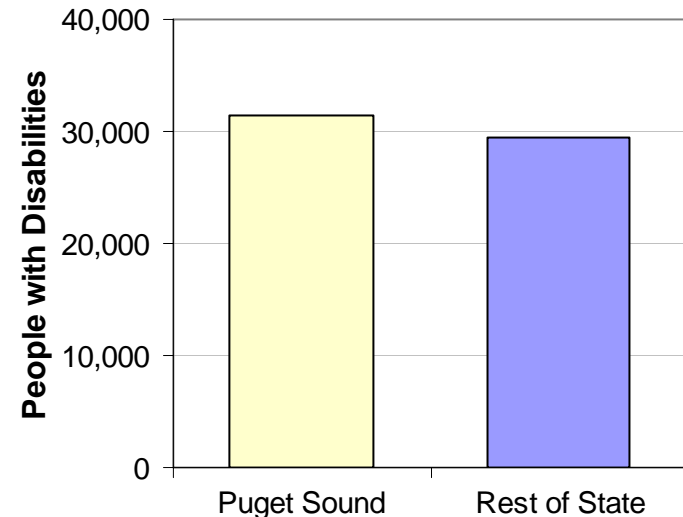
- Roadway safety improvements targeted at senior drivers
- More demand response service for growing suburban elderly
- Rural transportation for isolated elders

Persons with Disabilities in Washington

- There are a total of 60,850 persons with disabilities receiving assistance from the DSHS Division of Developmental Disabilities and Vocational Rehabilitation.
- According to the National Health Information Statistical database, in Washington:
 - Sensory limitations severe enough to affect everyday life afflict about 5% of the adult population.
 - About 228,000 have physical disabilities that affect their ability to walk and get around outside of the home.

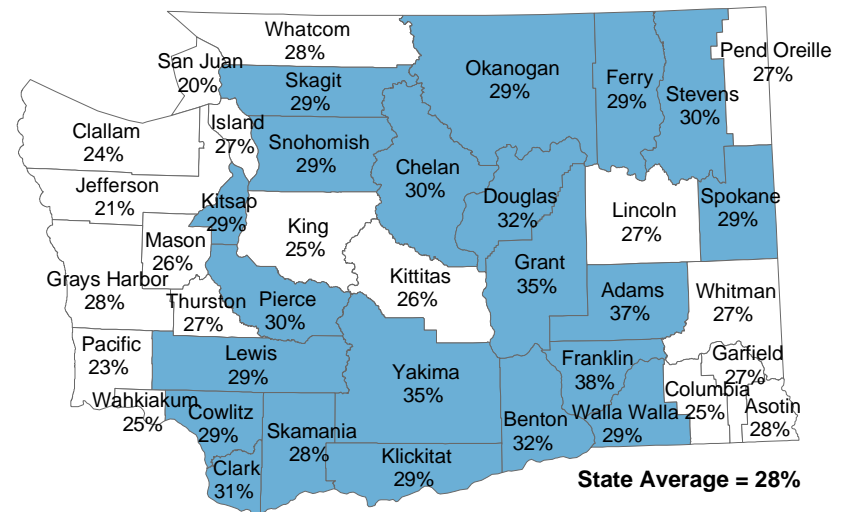


People with Disabilities Residing in the Puget Sound Region vs. the Rest of the State



Washington's Children

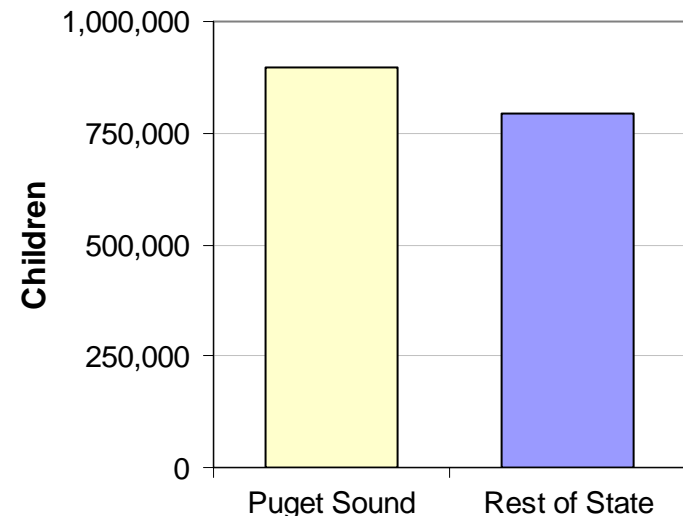
- Children, age 1 through 19 account for nearly 28% of the total state population.
- From 1990-2000, the number of children age 19 and under increased 20.5% statewide.
- Over 1 million children attend school in Washington and state funding covers 65% of the school districts' transportation costs.
- Transportation for childcare and after school programs is often limited, particularly for kids in rural communities.
- Homeless children have transportation difficulties when transitioning from temporary housing locations.



% of County Population 19 and Under in 2002

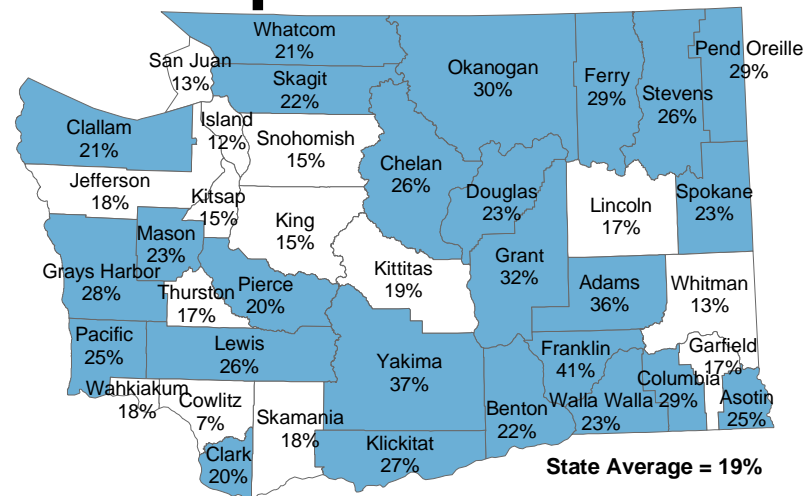
Below State Average Above State Average

Children Residing in the Puget Sound Region vs. the Rest of the State



Washington's Low Income Population

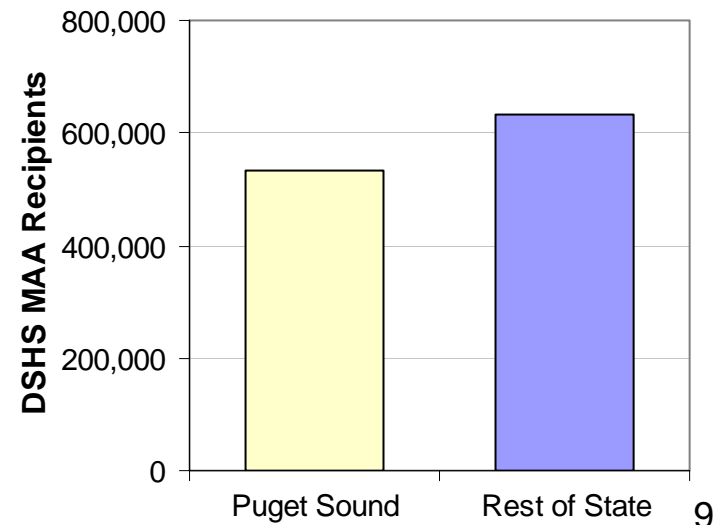
- In 2002, 1.16 million people with low incomes were assisted by DSHS, totaling \$2.45 billion in assistance.
- Low income residents spend a higher percentage of their income on transportation than others. However, many people on public assistance subsidies receive transportation support.
- Low income people in some rural counties and Tribal Nations may not have access to public transportation services.
- Food stamp grants increased 53% between 2000 and 2003 to \$382 million. DSHS caseloads increased 38% during the same time period.



DSHS MAA Recipients as % of County Population in 2002

Below State Average Above State Average

DSHS MAA Recipients Residing in the Puget Sound Region vs. the Rest of the State

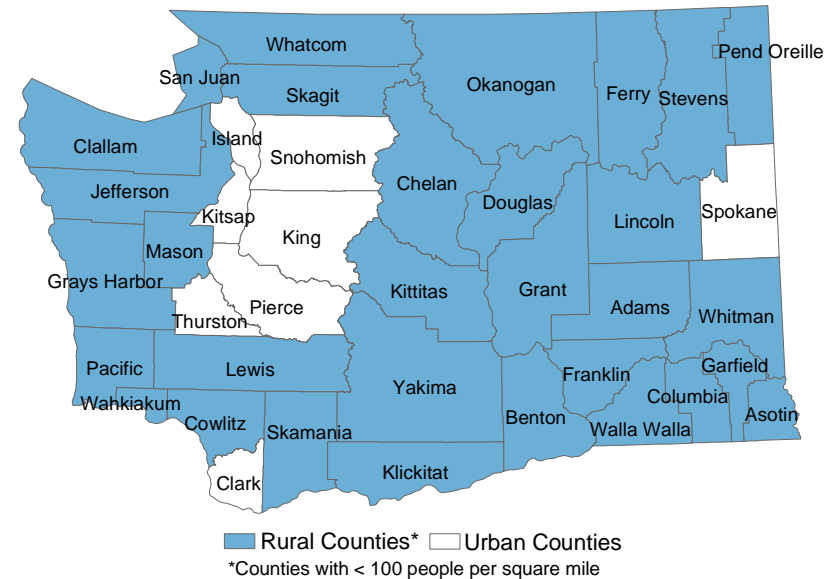
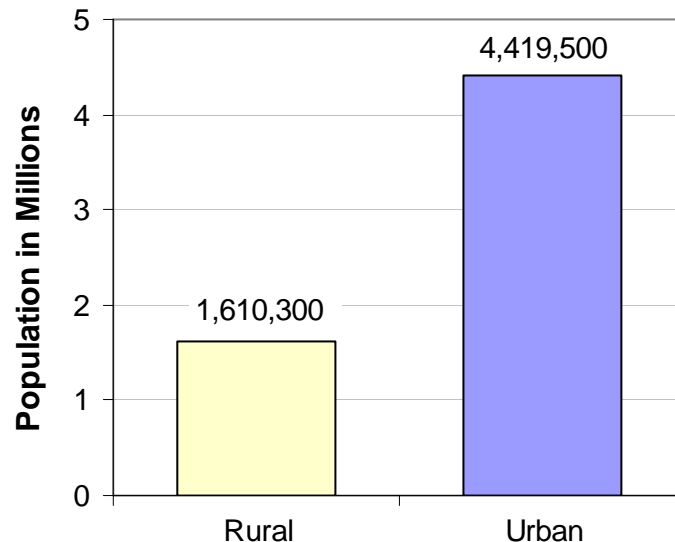


Transportation Challenges in Rural Areas

To maintain economic viability of rural communities, people in these communities must maintain access to the urban centers for banking, commerce, law, engineering, medicine and other specializations.

In rural areas, this access is normally provided by automobile. With limited options, and long distances, providing this access to people who cannot drive is a challenge.

Population in Rural Areas vs. Urban Areas



Rural Counties in Washington*

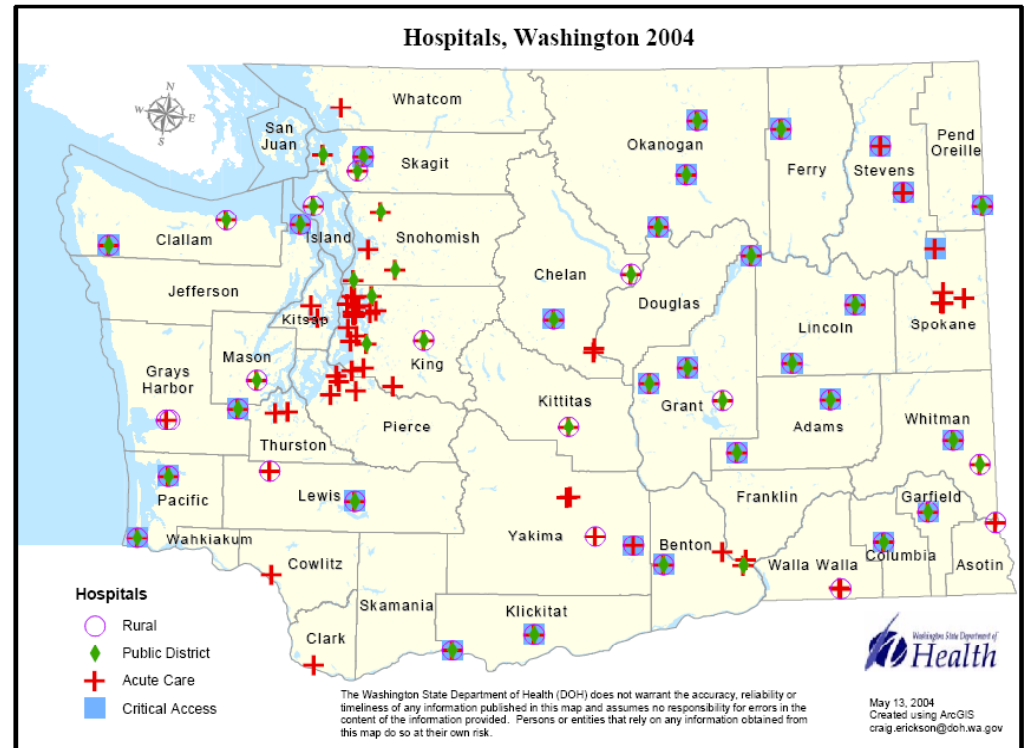
Adams, Asotin, Benton, Chelan, Clallam, Columbia, Cowlitz, Douglas, Ferry, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Kittitas, Klickitat, Lewis, Lincoln, Mason, Okanogan, Pacific, Pend Oreille, San Juan, Skagit, Skamania, Stevens, Wahkiakum, Walla Walla, Whatcom, Whitman, and Yakima

* Per RCW 43.160.020, 43.168.020
List effective through June 30, 2005, OFM

Rural Health Care Challenges

With the consolidation of medical services in urban areas -- due to the high cost of new medical technology and the difficulty of recruiting and keeping personnel -- rural hospitals must send many patients on to hospitals that can offer the specialists and equipment required by specialized treatment.

Many of the rural hospitals in Washington are not equipped to treat the most complex injuries or repetitive medical treatments. Many patients are transported to urban facilities - often by air.



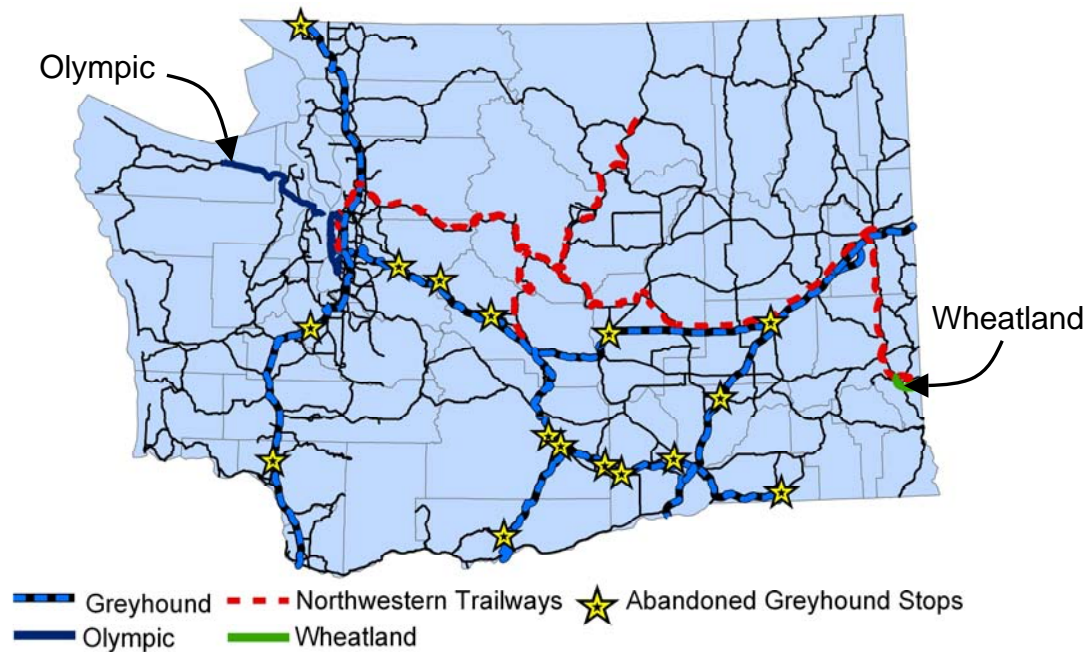
Intercity Bus Service

Intercity bus services provide the only connections to urban centers for many rural communities.

The main providers are Greyhound, Olympic, Northwestern Trailways, Wheatland Express and Amtrak. The recent changes in Greyhound's service design and their emphasis on serving larger communities puts pressure on local and state funded services to connect the smaller communities to the larger ones.

In the few rural areas where it exists, fixed route service can provide connections between communities for residents and visitors, linking rural hubs with urban services and providing regional connections to the intercity transportation services.

Community connectors (locally based van or bus operators) can also fill in the gap to provide continuing access to the rail, bus, and air services needed by rural residents.



Abandoned Greyhound Stops

(effective August, 2004)

Blaine, Camas, Castlerock, Cle Elum, Connell, Ft. Lewis, George, Goldendale, Grandview, Lyle, North Bend, N. Bonneville, Prosser, Richland, Ritzville, Skamania, Snoqualmie Pass, Toppenish, Walla Walla, Wapato, and Washougal

State and Federal Laws Addressing Access to Transportation

Americans with Disabilities Act

The 1990 Act mandates that transit agencies provide accessible fixed route service, and paratransit service for persons with disabilities at a level that is comparable to the fixed route services available to the general public. The act defines what constitutes comparability.

FTA Section 5310

The Federal Transit Administration provides funding for Elderly and Persons with Disabilities Transportation. The funds pass through the Department of Transportation to providers.

FTA Section 5311

Provides funding for rural public transportation grants for operating public transportation in rural areas. The funds pass through the Department of Transportation to providers.

Special Needs grants in the 2003 Legislative Package for \$18 million in 2003-2005.

Coordinating Special Needs Transportation

RCW 47.06B.010 established a program to coordinate different transportation services in order to meet the needs of more people with special transportation needs by removing inefficiencies and coordination barriers.

In addition to defining persons with special needs, **RCW 47.06B.010** outlines “Special needs coordinated transportation” and developed through a collaborative community process involving transportation providers; human service programs and agencies; consumers; social, educational, and health service providers; employer and business representatives; employees and employee representatives; and other affected parties.

Rural Mobility Grants

State grants for public transportation in and between rural communities.

Public Transit Services that Support Access

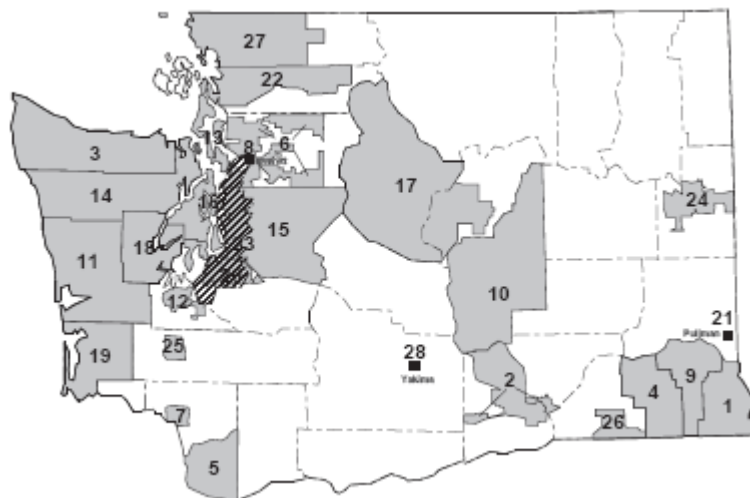
Public transit has a significant role in transporting people who do not drive through their fixed routes, dial-a-ride services, and special bus fares for the elderly, children and persons with disabilities. While public transit districts are available to 80% of the population through 26 transit agencies, a large portion of rural Washington has no public transit services.

Public transit agency spending represents a majority of funding for access services. We don't know how much of this spending is for special needs groups, nor do we know the number of special needs people who use fixed route services.

As indicated in the map, public transit districts do not cover all areas of the state.

Washington State Public Transportation

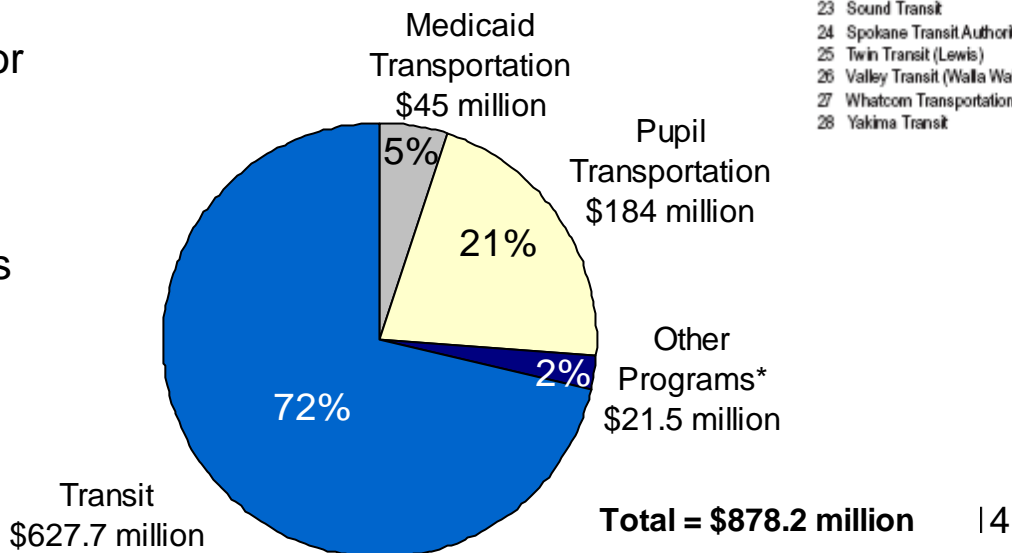
Transit Authorities



Legend

- Transit Systems
 - System Boundary
 - City Systems
 - Regional Transit Authority
- 1 Asotin County Transit
 - 2 Ben Franklin Transit
 - 3 Clallam Transit System
 - 4 Columbia County Public Transportation
 - 5 C-TRAN (Clark)
 - 6 Community Transit (Snohomish)
 - 7 Cowlitz Transit Authority (CUBS)
 - 8 Everett Transit
 - 9 Garfield County Transportation
 - 10 Grant Transit
 - 11 Grays Harbor Transportation Authority
 - 12 Intercity Transit (Thurston)
 - 13 Island Transit
 - 14 Jefferson Transit Authority
 - 15 King County Metro Transit
 - 16 Kitsap Transit
 - 17 Link Transit (Chelan/Douglas)
 - 18 Mason County Transportation Authority
 - 19 Pacific Transit
 - 20 Pierce Transit
 - 21 Pullman Transit
 - 22 Skagit Transit
 - 23 Sound Transit
 - 24 Spokane Transit Authority
 - 25 Twin Transit (Lewis)
 - 26 Valley Transit (Walla Walla)
 - 27 Whatcom Transportation Authority
 - 28 Yakima Transit

Transportation Access Public Funds



Demand Response Service Provided by Public Transit Agencies

- Public Transit Agencies contribute nearly \$100 million a year or 16% of their annual budget for demand response service.
- In 2001, fixed route service averaged \$3.44 a trip in urban areas and \$4.86 in rural locations.
- Demand response service averaged \$15.13 in small cities and \$24.66 in urban areas for the same time period.
- At the current rate of growth, and with current funding levels, public transit agencies cannot keep up with the mandatory demand responsive service, without negatively impacting fixed route service.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 mandates that transit agencies provide paratransit service for persons with disabilities at a level that is comparable to the fixed route services available to the general public.

Demand Responsive Service provided by Transit

	Urbanized	Small City	Rural	Statewide Totals
Service Area Population	3,718,165	848,666	659,284	5,226,115
Total Vehicle Hours	1,251,550	373,661	166,128	1,791,339
Total Vehicle Miles	19,196,997	5,531,921	2,456,762	27,185,680
Passenger Trips	2,948,484	1,088,530	524,217	4,561,231
Operating Cost/Revenue Hour	\$66.77	\$54.30	\$53.40	\$64.63
Operating Expenses	\$72,089,574	\$18,692,426	\$9,030,135	\$99,812,135

Demand response or dial-a-ride service is public transportation service characterized by flexible routing and scheduling of relative small vehicles to provide door-to-door or point-to-point transportation at the passenger's request.

Broad Network of Public and Private Transportation Services

- In addition to public transit agencies, a broad network of public and private non-profit agencies and private for-profit companies provide specialized transportation services.
- 39 large and small public and private non-profit agencies providing these services include organizations such as:
 - People for People who provide service in Yakima County and Mason County
 - The Fremont Public Association in Seattle
 - The Okanogan Senior Center
 - The Makah Tribal Council

Many of these organizations rely on volunteer drivers which provides cost savings.

- To better coordinate Medicare-related transportation (\$40 million spent per year to purchase 2.6 million trips) across this network, nine medical assistance brokers, covering 13 brokerage areas, match up clients with providers.
- In addition, many small private for-profit companies are engaged in providing specialized transportation services, including cabulances, taxis, and others.

Role of Brokers

- Establish call centers for clients and caseworkers to contact when a ride is needed
- Maintain current eligibility information on client populations
- Screen riders to determine the most appropriate, least costly mode of transportation
- Central processes for distributing and grouping rides
- Collect data and bill the funding source for the trip.

Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation

The legislature created the nine member Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation (ACCT) in 1998, including: WSDOT, DSHS, OSPI, CTED, Association for Pupil Transportation, Community Transportation Association of America-Northwest, Washington State Transit Association, and two citizens.

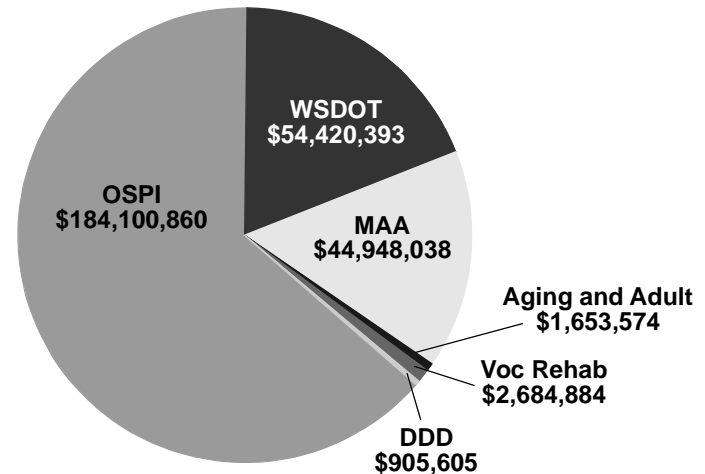
What are we trying to achieve with coordinated transportation?

Remove barriers to access transportation through coordinated transportation services statewide. Significant local, state, federal and private money is spent on accessing transportation. We cannot afford to have needs unmet due to uncoordinated spending.

Why is coordination so important

- It leverages all public and private funds together to improve effectiveness of the return on investment
- Reduces duplication and unnecessary service trips
- Makes it easier for users to access essential services

Special Needs Transportation Allocation 2003



Sources: WSDOT, OSPI, DSHS

Key to Chart

OSPI: Office of the Superintendent of Public instruction
DSHS: Department of Social and Health Services
DDD: DSHS Division of Developmental Disabilities
Voc Rehab: Vocational Rehabilitation Services
MAA: Medical Assistance Administration

What Are We Doing to Alleviate Rural Isolation?

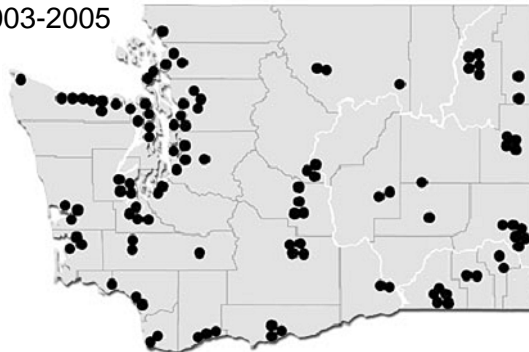
- Isolation is both a local and a regional phenomenon. The Washington legislature provided funding to support “rural mobility.” This money is available to public and private non-profit providers.
- For 2003-2005, Washington allocated \$30.9 million for rural mobility.

State funds available through the rural mobility program:

- \$6.9 million for competitive grants
- \$6 million for formula allocation
- \$18 million for special needs and paratransit services
 - \$14 million for Transit agencies
 - \$4 million for non-profits

- The Federal Transit Administration in their rural program provide funding for intercity ground transportation connections.
- During the same time frame \$9.7 million in federal funds have been available to connect people to other communities locally and regionally.
- **Federal Funds** available through the Federal Transit Administration rural program 2003-2004
 - Local General Public \$7.2 million
 - Intercity \$1.2 million
 - Senior and Disabled \$1.3 million

Location of Competitive Transportation Grants
2003-2005



Emerging Issues in Transportation Access

- There is a growing elderly population in Washington who have distinct needs. Since many of the elderly will continue to drive until they cannot, these needs are in safer roadway accommodations and demand response services.
- Demand response services are expensive to provide, and are taking an increasing share of limited transit agency funding. With current funding, transit agencies face the dilemma of trading-off between demand response service and fixed route service.
- Continuing focus on better coordination between services is needed to minimize duplication and make the most of available revenue.
- As rural areas continue to lose travel options and basic community services, transportation access for rural special needs groups will grow as an unmet need.